

The Statue of Liberty in New York City's harbor became a symbol of freedom in the first half of the 20th century. That's when millions of European immigrants came to the United States by ship and passed through the harbor. The statue of a tall lady holding a torch was a welcoming beacon.

A GIANT SCULPTURE

The Statue of Liberty is a giant sculpture of a woman dressed in flowing robes and wearing a spiked crown. Her right hand holds a gold torch high above her head. Her left arm holds a book of law with the date July 4, 1776, the date Americans declared their independence from Britain. The statue from base to torch is 305 feet (93 meters) high. The lady herself stands 151 feet (46 meters) tall.



VISITING THE STATUE OF LIBERTY

The Statue of Liberty stands on Liberty Island. You can reach the island by ferry from New York City. An elevator takes you to an observation deck at the top of the monument's base. Some visitors climb 354 steps to reach the statue's crown. From there, they have a spectacular view of New York City and its harbor. Ellis Island, where millions of immigrants entered the United States, is located nearby.



GIFT FROM FRANCE

The people of France gave the Statue of Liberty to the United States in 1884. The gift honors the alliance between the two nations during the American Revolution. Thousands of French citizens donated the money to build the statue. French sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi designed the statue.

After completion, the statue was exhibited in France. It was then taken apart for shipment to the United States and put back together at its present location. A poem is written on the base of the monument. It includes these words:

“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free....”

